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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 000074

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KCRM](#) [ASEC](#) [GB](#)
SUBJECT: SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR
INCREASED LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUDICIAL TRAINING

REF: STATE 5448

Classified By: Poloff Leslie Doumbia for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) Per reftel, please find the requested information to help further define law enforcement and judicial training needs for Gabon.

¶2. (C) All responses are keyed to questions from paragraph 2 in reftel:

-- Maritime border control poses a significant challenge for the poor island country of Sao Tome and Principe. Recent reporting also indicates that local crime is on the rise but generally limited to street crimes and non-confrontational burglaries committed primarily at night. The government's non-military security apparatus has also been plagued with internal strife. In 2007 and 2008, a group of renegade police officers led a series of mutinies due to a dispute over back pay, which resulted in the death of one member of the group and several injuries. In 2009, the government arrested over 30 people, some associated with a disbanded mercenary group, and accused them of plotting a coup. Due to a significant lack of maritime border control, a growing criminal element, and weak surveillance and law enforcement capabilities, STP could become a transit point for terrorist elements, drugs and illicit goods.

-- The capability of STP's non-military sector to effectively respond to these challenges is hampered by corruption, lack of resources and training, and manpower issues. Specifically, the impunity of law enforcement elements is a problem and efforts to reform the Criminal Investigation Police, a separate agency under the Ministry of Justice, have so far been unsuccessful. Law enforcement entities are only marginally effective at deterring crime and the response time to alarms or emergency calls is often too slow (15 minutes or longer) to disrupt burglaries or invasive crimes. Police have a mediocre record in apprehending suspects after arrest and are widely viewed as corrupt.

-- The police and related agencies could benefit from training in basic criminal investigations, interviewing techniques, the interpretation and application of existing laws, computer and software training and the development of an effective case management system.

-- STP has shown its willingness to cooperate with the USG on security concerns, notably on maritime security issues in the Gulf of Guinea region. STP has welcomed the various initiatives and activities of the U.S. Navy's Africa Partnership Station (APS).

-- Portugal frequently provides bilateral assistance, including training for STP's non-military security elements.

-- Currently, there is no existing or planned non-military regional training center in STP.

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